

Message Text

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TAGS: EAID, FAO, UNWFC, EAGR

SUBJ: IGC/28TH SESSION: EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

REF : ROME 13507

1. EMERGENCY ITEM FOR 28TH SESSION INCLUDES FOUR DOCUMENTS, OF WHICH WASHINGTON HAS ONLY TWO. SEPARATE MESSAGE ON ITEM 5-D, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANNUAL EMERGENCY ALLOCATIONS. COMMENTS FOLLOW ON REMAINING THREE.

2. ITEM 5-A, GENERAL (SEEN ONLY IN DRAFT BY AID REP.) IS DETAILED REPORT ON OPERATIONS, LARGELY DESCRIPTIVE, ALONG LINES OF 5-B PAPER FOR 26TH SESSION, UPDATING INFORMATION TO JUNE 30, 1975. OPERATIONAL FACILITY SOMEWHAT IMPROVED BY INCREASING ABILITY TO SECURE OTHER STOCKS (BORROWING OR DIVERSION) FOR EMERGENCY PURPOSES WITH LATER REPLACEMENT. THIS WAS DONE IN 13 OF THE 17 OPERATIONS APPROVED BETWEEN JULY 1, 1974 AND JUNE 30, 1975.

3. ITEM 5-B, EXPERIENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS, IS AVAILABLE IN WASHINGTON. THIS 19-PAGE (PLUS ANNEXES) PAPER IS LARGELY DESCRIPTIVE BUT IT POINTS TO A NUMBER OF POSSIBILITIES FOR IMPROVEMENTS, INCLUDED CLOSE TIE-IN WITH IMPROVED EARLY WARNING SYSTEM, BETTER TRAINING FOR WFP FIELD OFFICERS, CENTRALIZED RESPONSIBILITY IN WFP HEADQUARTERS, BETTER ARRANGEMENTS

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WITH UNDRO, IMPROVEMENT INRECIPIENT GOVERNMENTS, ABILITIES

(A) TO PROVIDE BASIC DATA AND (B) TO MOBILIZE THEIR RESOURCES TO COPE WITH DISASTERS, AND GREATER SENSITIVITY ON PART OF DONORS TO CONFIRM AVAILABILITY OF SUPPLIES AND REDUCE TIME LAG IN PUTTING THEM IN SHIPPING POSITION. THESE ALL APPEAR TO BE SENSIBLE PROPOSALS TO ENABLE WFP TO CARRY OUT ITS MANDATE (AND THAT OF THE CFA, I.E. THE COMMITTEE ON FOOD AID POLICY AND PROGRAMME) FOR AN INCREASINGLY SUBSTANTIAL ROLE IN MEETING FOOD AID REQUIREMENTS IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS. (PARA 5-C-2, PAGE 6, EMPHASIZES THE "NEW DIMENSION" OF THE ROLE OF MULTILATERAL EMERGENCY FOOD AID, AND CONSEQUENTLY THE ROLE OF WFP AS THE EXECUTIVE ARM FOR SUCH AID).

4. THE POINTS ON DONOR EFFICIENCY EASILY COULD GIVE RISE TO RENEWED CONSIDERATION OF THE NETHERLANDS PROPOSAL (NOW DEFINED AS STREAMLINING OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS TO SPEED UP SUPPLIES, BUT SOME DELEGATIONS INTERPRET AS STOCK SET ASIDE) OR SOME VARIATION THEREOF. REPORT ASSERTS THAT "NOT MUCH PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE SO FAR". A LIKELY RESULT, IF THERE IS PRESSURE IN THAT DIRECTION, WOULD BE REFERRAL TO A LATER SESSION OF THE CFA.

5. U.S. POSITION ON CENTRALIZATION IN WFP HEADQUARTERS, BETTER TRAINING FOR WFP OFFICERS AND CONTINUALLY IMPROVED GUIDANCE (DISASTER MANUAL, ETC.) SHOULD BE SUPPORTIVE, SINCE THIS IS THE DIRECTION OUR INFORMAL COUNSEL HAS TAKEN, BUT ALSO MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE, ON WHICH THERE IS A U.S. MEMBER.

6. THE REPORT REFLECTS SOME CONCERN THAT THE SHARE OF ABOUT ONE-HALF OF WFP RESOURCES GOING FOR DROUGHT RELIEF "MUST -- IN THE LONG RUN -- BE CONSIDERED TOO HIGH." U.S. STATEMENT MIGHT INDICATE THAT THIS IS A PECULIARLY APPROPRIATE USE OF WFP RESOURCES SINCE IT TIES IN RATHER DIRECTLY WITH FOOD PRODUCTION PROBLEM, BUT SUPPORT THE CONCLUSION THAT BETTER PREDICTION AND TIMELY PREPARATION OF FOOD FOR WORK PROJECTS DESIGNED TO ALLEVIATE DROUGHT OR PREVENT ITS RECURRENCE IS A BETTER WAY OF MEETING THE PROBLEM.

7. ITEM 5-C, FEASIBILITY AND ADVANTAGES OF EVALUATING, MAY BE ADEQUATE IN TERMS OF WHAT THE SECRETARIAT WAS ASKED
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TO DO (FROM RECORD OF 27TH SESSION IT IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR WHAT WAS BEHIND THE REQUEST FOR A PAPER). THE RECOMMENDATIONS APPEAR TO BE ACCEPTABLE AS GUIDANCE TO WFP AS TO THE TYPES OF EMERGENCY OPERATIONS THAT SHOULD BE SUBJECTED TO EVALUATION. HOWEVER, THE SCOPE, LARGELY LIMITED TO OPERATIONAL ISSUES (SEE IN PARTICULAR THE LAST SENTENCE OF PARA. 7) IS TOO NARROW TO BE OF REAL USE TO THE COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH FURTHER GUIDANCE ON THE TYPES OF EMERGENCIES IN WHICH WFC SHOULD INVOLVE ITSELF,

AND THOSE FOR WHICH WFP IS NOT THE BEST INSTRUMENTALITY.

8. SUGGEST CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO INCORPORATING IN U.S. POSITION PAPER A PROPOSAL TO ADD A PARA (E) TO RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH WOULD ASK FOR DISCUSSION PAPER/APPRAISAL, BASED ON WFP EXPERIENCE AND THE EVALUATIONS ENCOMPASSED IN PARA (D), OF THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF EMERGENCIES IN DIFFERENT KINDS OF AREAS, WHICH WOULD LEAD TO CONCLUSIONS AS TO THE TYPES OF SITUATIONS IN WHICH WFP PARTICIPATION IS MOST APPROPRIATE; AND, ON THE OTHER EXTREME, THOSE WHICH WFP SHOULD AVOID.VOLPE

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